While on this point, the member referred to the recovery of tom-tom charges from defaulters. These charges were being recovered at the rate of chs. 14 for each attachment, though the rate allowed under the rules was only chs. 14 per diem. Not only that, the Revenue Recovery Regulation made no provision either for tom-toming or for the recovery of charges for the same from the ryots.

Another instance in which the rule in force was being overlooked was in regard to the recovery of demand notice fees. These fees were often being recovered even when the notices had not been actually served on the parties.

Another reform suggested was in regard to the strengthening of the pakuthi staff which was out of all proportion to the multifarious duties devolving on them. The member suggested that one accountant and one peon might be added to the staff of each pakuthi for the present. Arrangements should also be made for keeping open all pakuthi cutcherries from morning to evening on all days. It was also necessary to provide quarters to the village staff near the pakuthi cutcherry, so that they may be enabled to reside in the pakuthi itself as enjoined by the rules.

The member referred in conclusion to the difficulties emanating from the want of an up-to-date Land Revenue Manual, no less to officers than to private persons and candidates appearing for the Revenue Test Examination. He urged for the early appointment of an officer to revise the Land Revenue Manual. Equally necessary was the publication of a Village Manual and a Taluk Manual. The late Land Revenue Commissioner had rightly recommended the publication of such manuals and Government had in their order R. O. C. 2012 of 1921 Rev., dated the 13th December 1922, stated that the question was engaging their attention. Five years had since elapsed, but no orders had yet come out. The books had to be published and brought up-to-date from time to time. Pending the publication of the books, arrangements might be made with the Land Revenue Commissioner for publishing all important land revenue rules and orders in the form of circulars in the Government Gazette.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar, I rubbed my eyes and looked; and I find it very hard to believe that you are a non-official representative of this Assembly. It seems to me that you might well be a Government official of length and experience in service. You speak with many voices. At one time I thought it was an experienced Dewan Peishkar advising me as to what is necessary for a taluk administration. Another time I was convinced that it was the Land Revenue Commissioner speaking to me and advising me as to what was necessary for each division of the State. And again a third time I thought it was the Financial Secretary and the Chief Account Officer telling me as to how a taluk treasury should be improved and managed. You have made a careful study of the working of taluk offices. Your knowledge goes so far as to possess an intimate acquaintance with G. O. No. so and so, of 1920 which you quote and which apparently had been communicated to you officially. You also show an intimate knowledge of what the Land Revenue Commissioner or the Peishkars have recommended in the past. I am glad to see that a non-official member of this Assembly devotes so much care and study to questions which Government officers are also striving to study. I am also glad to find that in many cases what you say is identical with what experienced Government officers say. There are faults and defects in the taluk administration. Several of the points you have raised today have been raised already by the officers of Government and the Land Revenue Commissioner has made recommendations which are being examined. I thank you very much for your kindly advice and for the close attention you have given to the working of the Government department.

6. Desirability of laying down a definite policy in regard to the disposal of Sirkar lands and the grant of agricultural loans.

MR. SANKARA PILLAI RAMANATHA PILLAI (*Changanachery taluk, Group I*) dealt with the necessity of developing agriculture by following a wise and discreet policy in the assignment of Sirkar lands and by issuing agricultural loans on more liberal terms. In regard to the assignment of Sirkar lands, he pointed out that the present system of registering puduval lands in small blocks of 5 acres each was bound to fail. He was at the same time against the policy of assigning large areas of land to rich landowners. He therefore suggested that puduval lands

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might be parcelled out into 10 or 15 acre units and assigned to the poor and middle class ryots. In this connection he referred particularly to the undesirability of registering in large blocks the tea lands in the Peermade taluk.

In regard to the auction sale of lands, the member pointed out how the system was disadvantageous to the poor and the middle-class men, who were easily defeated by the moneyed classes. In order to avoid this consequence, he suggested that lands might be assigned not to the highest bidders, but to the earliest applicants or to the applicants who were most in need of them.

The maximum extent of land assignable to an individual should also be fixed and privisions made for excluding foreigners from the assignment of lands and for enforcing the cultivation of at least a specified portion of every registered area within a specified time.

In regard to the taravila on lands the member suggested that the rates should be fixed with reference to the quality of the lands in each taluk and that the maximum taravila assessable on a land should be fixed, beyond which no assessment should be made. The assessment of tadivila was also liable to much abuse in the hands of unscrupulous officers and to ward off such abuse, the member suggested that Government might register the lands on the understanding that they would themselves remove the timber and dispose of it within a prescribed time.

As other means of encouraging the progress of agriculture, the member suggested the judicious disafforestation of reserve forests adjacent to inhabited areas, the opening up of the forest areas by providing roads and means of communication, the recovery of taravila in easy instalments extending from five to ten years, and the remission of taxes on new lands till they began to yield.

The member next dealt with the issue of agricultural loans and proposed that agricultural loans might be issued by the Revenue Department on the recommendation of the Department of Agriculture. Similarly, no collateral security might be demanded from the applicants. The power of the Tahsildar and the Dewan Peishkar in the matter of issuing loans might also be raised to Rs. 700 and Rs. 3,000 respectively.

The member then indicated the lines on which the Agricultural Department could open a few tea and rubber estates, near which they could assign lands to private men for co-operative tea and rubber cultivation. When necessary, Government might even advance money to the cultivators and thus give an impetus to the cultivation of tea and rubber by the middle class men of the State.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Ramanatha Pillai, let me hasten to assure you that the Government will be delighted to grant registered lands to anybody who wants it and who is able to stake out his location and pay for his lands. I cannot, as you suggest, subscribe to the idea of the policy that lands should be sold below their value. Government are trustees of the people of Travancore for the lands of the State and cannot fulfil that trust and at the same time part with the lands at low value.

MEMBER : The Karanavan should give to the members of his Taravad the Taravad properties even without a price. Perhaps, there may be strangers prepared to pay high prices.

DEWAN : That is an imperfect analogy. Government, if a karanavan, has so many anandaravans that it will be impossible to provide for all of them. However, you have taken up the question of auction of puduval lands and restriction to five acre blocks. The whole of that question is already engaging the attention of Government. I am inclined to agree with you that the rules on the subject can be improved.

As regards lands that you want, there will be plenty of lands available about the Neriamangalam-Munnar road and what I may advise you and those who think with you, is to hurry up and select lands before others get them.

As regards price of puduvals, we have to deal with these as matters of commercial value. The Forest Department is a quasi-commercial department and I do not think it can afford to give away its timber for little or nothing.

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